

To: President's Cabinet  
From: Denise M. Trauth  
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting  
November 2, 2020

### **Impact of COVID-19 (#770)**

Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic trends at the national, state, and local levels. Parts of the United States and Texas are experiencing surges, with the wave expected to crest sometime during the holiday season. COVID-19 metrics (e.g., case counts and positivity rates) in Texas are trending upwards. Week-to-week comparisons (week of October 19, 2020, versus week of October 26, 2020) revealed an increase in the positivity rate from 9.1 to 9.8 percent. In Williamson County, new cases decreased from 28.3 to 36 cases per day, and the positivity rate decreased from 2.2 to three percent; and in Hays County, new cases changed from 18.9 to 22 cases per day and the positivity rate increased from 15.8 to 17.2 percent.

Texas State case counts continue to remain low. As of October 30, 2020, there are 29 active cases. The number of students housed in isolation is five and in quarantine is three.

In the fifth week of COVID-19 testing by Curative, Inc., 942 tests were conducted, with five returning positive. During the same week, the Student Health Center conducted 244 tests, with none returning positive. Overall, during the week of October 26, 2020, 1,186 on-campus tests were conducted, with five returning positive (0.4 percent). Positivity rates have declined four weeks straight from 2.5 percent during the week of October 5, 2020, to 1.6 percent during the week of October 12, 2020, to 0.9 percent during the week of October 19, 2020, and to 0.4 percent during the week of October 26, 2020.

Dr. Carranco provided a COVID-19 update for other universities. During the week of October 26, 2020, at The University of Texas at Austin, 3,591 tests were conducted with 22 returning positive for a positivity rate of 0.6 percent. At Texas A&M University, 2,596 tests were conducted with 121 returning positive for a positivity rate of 4.7 percent.

Contact tracing has yet to reveal evidence of transmission in classrooms, residence halls, or offices. Off-campus social gatherings with friends and family continue to be the primary concern for transmission.

Dr. Carranco announced that he will reconvene the Health, Wellness, and Safety Work Group to review how Texas State's COVID-19 measures are working and to determine if any new measures should be added based on emerging research.

**RTA: 11/16/20 Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco will discuss mid-semester review of the health and safety measures by the Health, Wellness, and Safety Work Group.**

Texas State has submitted a request to the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) for free COVID-19 testing at the Round Rock Campus. TDEM has indicated they are willing to providing the testing on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons beginning in November through December 3, 2020.

TDEM has contracted with a company called Davaco, to administer the Curative tests. Davaco has a mobile testing team of licensed EMTs, nurses, and medical professionals that are certified to administer the Curative tests. TDEM will monitor and spot check the team to ensure they are providing the best possible service for the university. The Davaco team will supply their own personal protection equipment and will adhere to the proper health and safety measures as set forth by state and federal guidelines.

The Davaco team's protocol is to disinfect and clean the space being utilized prior to the testing site being opened and after the testing has been completed for the day. The only requirements for the testing site are a room with power and accessible bathrooms. The team will set up check-in, a coughing station, and testing based on the room size. The team members will direct the flow of people coming into the space to ensure proper distance and face masks during the testing.

Mr. Raymond Loriaux, Coordinator, Emergency Management, has surveyed the Round Rock Campus and found some unused spaces that could be considered for the testing site. Space options were discussed. Cabinet members selected Room 116 in the St. David's School of Nursing Building for testing. Mr. Algoe will ensure that the room will be properly cleaned after testing. Dr. Carranco will work with Round Rock Campus administration to provide Davaco's team access to the room.

Dr. Carranco discussed the mass vaccination planning work group membership and charge. The purpose of the work group is to develop a mass vaccination plan for administering the COVID-19 vaccine, when one becomes available, to students, faculty, and staff.

Some vaccines will require ultra-cold storage and others only refrigeration. Cold storage is preferred as it can store vaccines for a longer time than refrigeration. Cold storage would, thus, allow Texas State to acquire 20,000 to 25,000 doses at once, avoiding reliance on weekly distributions.

COVID-19 vaccinations will be distributed in phases. The first phase could begin in December 2020 or January 2021 and will target healthcare personnel, pharmacists, emergency responders, and long-term care staff. Texas State can manage this small target population easily with existing vaccination protocols and resources. The second phase could begin in February or March 2021 and will target vulnerable populations and possibly those attending colleges/universities. This phase will require mass vaccinations that would be beyond our typical protocols and resources. The third phase could begin in the latter part of spring 2021 and will be available to the general population.

Managing the vaccine will require a rather large work force. Persons receiving the vaccine will have to fill out consent forms, and Texas State staff will have to enter demographic and vaccine information into the state's database, ImmTrac2. Cabinet members discussed identifying an Information Technology solution to make it easier to upload significant amounts of data rather

than manual entry. Based on national data, Dr. Carranco expects that up to 60 percent of faculty, staff, and students could want the vaccine. Thus, Texas State can expect to deliver as many as 25,000 doses of vaccine for a first dose and again in 21-28 days for a second dose. This will take a coordinated effort and lots of help from several departments on campus.

### **Pandemic/Post Pandemic Work Groups (#771)**

Dr. Ausbrooks summarized the survey results, top themes, and representative quotes from the pandemic survey that began on October 16, 2020. This survey focused on impressions of morale and actions that supervisors and the university could take to improve employee morale. After the first week of dissemination, 358 staff and faculty responded to the survey (54 percent were staff and 46 percent were faculty). When asked if they were aware of the actions taken by the university after the Faculty and Staff Morale Work Group initial recommendations in summer 2020, 39 percent answered "yes," 40 percent answered "no," and 21 percent answered "unsure." When asked to rate current morale, 36 percent rated theirs as extremely positive or somewhat positive, 17 percent rated theirs as neither positive nor negative, and 47 percent rated their as extremely negative or somewhat negative. Written comments revealed major themes, including employee morale is improved when the supervisor manages well, allows employees to work from home or to have flexible schedules, recognizes and rewards employees for tasks well-done and additional work performed, shares information about university decisions, applies policies consistently, trusts their employees, and refrains from making judgmental remarks about employees who receive work place modifications. Likewise, employee morale can be improved if the university, as a whole, allows employees to work remotely or have flexible schedules, raises salaries, communicates more often and in multiple ways, remain transparent about the budget situation, interprets and applies policies consistently, provides instruction on the annual review process, is forthcoming about how decisions are made, and is more empathetic.

Dr. Ausbrooks mentioned that some respondents: expressed their appreciation for keeping the Student Recreation Center open, requested to use wellness time remotely, and asked that vacancies be filled to reduce stress.

Though the Faculty and Staff Morale Work Group are still in the process of finalizing recommendations, Cabinet members discussed proceeding with a town hall prior to Thanksgiving, covering information that has been shared via email and on the roadmap. Dr. Trauth asked that a work group (consisting of University Communications staff and faculty with expertise in Communication Studies) be convened to address ways to improve communication. Suggestions discussed include weekly fact sheet for supervisors, strategic ways to get information directly to mid-level managers, and sharing a fact per week (e.g., the convening of a mass vaccination planning work group for the week of November 2, 2020).

### **Development Update (#588)**

Dr. Breier and guest Dr. Dan Perry, Assistant Vice President for University Advancement, reviewed fiscal year quarterly reports and discussed fundraising strategies. Dr. Perry provided an update on the Big Ideas and on Bobcats-to-Bobcats scholarship for incoming freshmen. The goal of Bobcats-to-Bobcats is to raise \$1 million to bring new freshmen to the university in fall 2021.

**Inclusion and Diversity (#747)**

Mr. Algoe and Dr. Lloyd continued the discussion on the "Roadmap to Equitable Relationships" proposal presented by Life Anew on October 26, 2020. Cabinet approved the following student cohorts: Black President's Council, Underrepresented Student Advisory Council, Student Government Officers, Student Organizations Council, and the Committee on Racial Equality. Cabinet also approved the following faculty and staff cohorts: Coalition of Black Faculty and Staff, President's Cabinet, Hispanic Policy Network, Faculty of Color and Faculty Senate, Deans and Chairs, and the University Police Department.

**Texas State University Emergency Operations Plan (#776)**

Item was not discussed. This item will be returned to a future Cabinet meeting agenda.

**President's Update (#556)**

President Trauth announced that she will be testifying in front of the Legislative Budget Board and the Office of the Governor on November 5, 2020.

Mr. Algoe provided an update on political activities that occurred in front of the Performing Arts Center on November 2, 2020.

**Significant Issues (#01)**

Mr. Algoe discussed the monthly employee relations report.

Mr. Algoe provided an update on the search for a new Assistant Vice President for Human Resources.

Dr. Lloyd reviewed the schedule of events at the Boko Watch Party hosted by the Elections Task Force on November 3, 2020.

DMT:ta

Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on November 13, 2020.